ROSIN THE BOW

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Formerly The Ramapo Ranger's Bulletin.

For Square and Folk Dancers

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Thank You!

All of you who wrote in to say nice things about 'Rosin the Bow'! I'm really surprised though that there were no brickbats among the bouquets.

Well this is tabbed as an international issue, and as such it's a bit difficult to decide what to put in and what to leave out without having somebody feel neglected.

On the other side of the fence however, I'd like to ask by just what arbitrary process of selection our metropolitan 'internationalists' set aside Caribbean and American Indian dances with polite sneers at either the dance technique or the music? The usual plaint is that we should learn to understand the music of other peoples; and as for the dances being 'too crude' or 'just jumping up and down'; such remarks only betray an utter ignorance of the subject. Some of the Indian dances are intricate ceremonials that require weeks of patient practice; and surely New Yorkers must remember the Jemez Hoop Dancers at the National Folk Festival in Madison Square Garden? (And say, isn't it about time to bring this big event to New York again?) In any event I recommend that some of our folk dancers go to see the Laubins at the Museum of Natural History when they appear there. (April 4th; 3 P.M.)

And 'Caribbean' dances? Not all of the West Indian dances are variants of the buttock-rolling theme; many are direct descendants of fashionable quadrilles, the old English country dances and Spanish, French, Danish and Portuguese dances of long ago. In fact there are quadrille clubs maintained by various West Indian groups in Harlem (yes, you do need an introduction) and, to the best of my knowledge, I'm the only outsider to visit them or display any interest.

Well compose yourselves ------ I have another gripe for next month and I think it will rate a cheer from most of the Nationality groups!

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SQUARE DANCE

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Caller -- Rod La Farge

N.Y. Folk Dancing in Brief.

I guess the proper place to start a brief sketch of New York folk dancing in general is with Mary Wood Hinnan. She was the real pioneer in this field; collecting and teaching folk dances back in the days of the Bloomer Girls and later was one of the guiding lights of the New York Folk Festival Council.

Still among the pioneers we must list Elizabeth Burchenal, and C. Ward Crampton. Elizabeth Burchenal is still quite active in the New York scene, directing the Folk Arts Center and she appeared at the opening of the current Folk Dance Forum at City Center. She is the aurthor of several books about folk dancing that have served many groups as a standard reference for years. Most are still in print.

A great deal of credit for the present popularity of folk dancing in the New York area can be assigned to the last World's Fair and the now vanished Folk Festival Council. Time and material unselfishly given by the various nationalty groups and their leaders, bolstered this undertaking and sparked the wave of international groups that later spread over the metropolitan area. The surviving groups are listed in the directory section in the back of this issue.

The largest international group in the city at the present time is Michael Herman's Community Folk Dance Center (got it's impetus from the Dance Common at the last World's Fair); second largest is Bill Cairn's Saturday night group at Irving plaza.

We can't really complete the picture without a reference to the musicans favored by the international groups. The best known are Miss Brown, Stasia Jordan and Mrs. Siller. Miss Brown is a familiar figure to most metropolitan folk dancers who have danced

to her piano renditions of popular folk numbers for so many happy hours. (She made some nice recordings for me.)

Stasia Jordan teaches folk dancing as well as playing for a number of groups, including the Polish Folk Art and Dance Group.

Mrs. Siller is known and loved by all of New York's enthusiasts; her popularity is attested by the number of groups for whom she plays. (See directory.) The death of her husband last year was a great loss to the field, but the fact that Mrs. Siller carries on offers solace. It is to be regretted that this team made only the one set of recordings. (Asch album #344)

A bibliography of international folk dancing? Well, I've compiled one; also a record list, but they would fill a couple issues of this necessarily small publication, so I'll split it into nationality classifications and run it piecemeal in future nationality numbers.

The same system will be used to cover the various ethnic dance organizations, and from time to time we shall describe visits to international groups.

RAY BRUYN

Even in these days when the popularity of square dancing is increasing by leaps and bounds, a caller with an average of better than five booked nights per week is a bit of a figure, so we'll tell you all about our last visit to Ray Bruyn at Montgomery Grange.

Some of the Franklin Grangers who intended to go up with us became involved elsewhere, so only three of us made the trip --- Joe Jeniec, Helen and I. We were lucky enough to have clear roads all the way and made it in two hours.

The hall was a two story building with the dancing upstairs; a good sized floor, it held 15 or 16 sets without too much crowding. They had the loveliest bevy of really pretty girls I've seen around and Joe had a half-dozen different partners during the evening.

Ray and his Kentucky Moonshiners were set up on the stage, checkered jugs and all and were surprised when we walked in. Ray's orchestra is more or less of a family affair; Mrs. Bruyn plays the piano, one of his sons handles the sax and Ray plays the drums, banjo and guitar in addition to calling! His father was an old-time square dance musican well-known in the Middletown area.

As you can see in the directory, Ray and his gang range from Centerville to Pine Bush; at one time he covered as far as Sussex, but he's too busy these days to get down that far.

Very few got up for the couple of modern numbers; the standard round dance there was the two-step. A Paul Jones and the waltzes also brought everyone out -- all the waltzing was in the dark! And they did an interesting schottische variation that I am describing at the end of this article. Shall we we call it the Montgomery?

The squares were a bit more involved than are popular at most North Jersey resorts: such figures as right and left six and three ladies chain were more favored than the simple visiting type. They even did one that seemed to be a remnant of the old Saratoga Lancers, including heads right and left with the sides. One peculiarity in common with the Jersey dancers is their chassé across when the call is 'promenade across'.

Bob De Long dropped in; he had some hard luck last month - smashed his car; junked completely.

I called a set for the crowd: Outside Track, Red River Girl, and Swingo. They had no trouble with three calls that were new to them!

We had a gabfest at the local Inn after the dance and arrived back in Haledon in time for Joe to have breakfast and go to work.....

Here's how on that schottische:

Two couples in line, arm around each other's waists. Point the right toe forward (Fig. 1), touch right toe to floor behind; walk 3 steps forward: R-L-R.

Point the left toe forward, point the left toe across in front of the right (Fig. 2), walk backwards 3 steps, L-R-L and hop on the left.

Walk forward 3 steps; R-L-R and hop on the right at the same time swing the left leg over in front of the right as all sway to the left.

Walk forward 3 steps L-R-L and hop on the left, swinging the right leg in front of the left as all sway to the right. (Fig. 3)

*Step forward on the right foot, hop on the right, swinging the left leg across as all sway to the left; step forward on the left foot, hop on the left swinging the right leg across as all sway to the right. Repeat from (*).

Fig 1.

Fig 2

Fig 3

The music for this is recorded on Decca record 3729A as 'The Mountain Belle Schottische'. The 'Old Southern Schottische' in Henry Ford's 'Good Morning' fits well, but the Ford recording of this is much too slow at 78 RPM. The dancers in this section have gone all out for the 'Montgomery' since I introduced it here; when nothing else is available they dance it to the currently popular 'Chickery Chick! (Try it.)

NEW RECORDINGS

Both Ed Durlacher and Lawrence Loy have finished cutting their new square dance albums. Here's the data:

Ed Durlacher - four 10-inch records,
Sonora label, release date - May.

Girls in the Center, Back to Back
Uptown and Downtown
Red River Valley
You Did It So Well
Nellie Bly
Virginia Reel (Contra-dance)
Sanita Hill (Progressive Circle Dance)
Loobie Loo; Skip to My Lou (Games)

Lawrence Loy - four Victor platters,
out around the end of March.

Golden Slippers (Split the Ring)
Solomon Levi (First couple Separate)
Comin' Round the Mountain (The Harem)
Jingle Bells (Basket)
Paddy Dear (Not Woodhull's Version)
Spanish Cavalier (Similiar to Ford's)
Turkey in the Straw (Texar Star Var.)
Irish Washerwoman (Without Call)

These calls are faster and more complicated than those in his last Columbia album which was intended for beginners.

And I heard a rumor that Floyd Woodhull is in line for a new album; also one of the newer outfits is debating a contra-dance album.

Victor record # 20-1812 'Put Your Little Foot' is danceable for the Wyoming version. Better pick up a couple before they're gone.

Red River Girl

Tune:- Red River Valley.

Introduction.

All join hands and you circle,
Halfway round, then the other way back home;
When you're home everybody swing your partner,
Swing your own, she's your Red River Girl.

Figure.

(A) Four hands around in a circle,
Then you swing with the opposite girl;
Oh, you step right back and salute* her,
Swing your own, she's your Red River Girl.

Call 3 times before break; the 2nd and 3rd times replace line (A) with line (B).

(B) On to the next and you circle.

Break.

All dos-a-dos on your corner,
Dos-a-dos with your Red River Girl;
The elbow swing with your corner,
Swing around and around with a whirl.
Now a right hand to your little darlin',
And a grand right and left round the hall;
Salute* your little honey when you meet her,
Promenade, promenade one and all.

EXPLANATION

None required, except that (*) is a military salute.

Swingo

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Ramblin's

The Ramapo Rangers took a trip up to Mine Hill to give an exhibition for Al Shaner on his opening night there. His press-agent sure did a bang-up job on the publicity --- even had the pictures that we had been in all listed! Had a swell time all told. Rangers attending included Helen and Rod La Farge, Estelle and Erwin Guse, Barbara and Frank Schwab, Frieda and Jack Van Saun, Charlotte and Alfred Coxley, Catherine and Ed Laurence, Mary Arrastibia and Joe Jeniec.

The New Jersey Folklore Society met Feb. 16th at the Newark Museum. Plans for the coming months were discussed.

Squares and Rounds held an Early American night at the Westside (NYC) YM; the Finnish Folk Dance Group held an open house at Imatra Hall on Feb. 21. I couldn't get to either; seems that all my nights are selling to the square dance enthusiasts.

Frania Wesołowska and a group from the Kołko Młodzieży Polskiej Robotniczej Kasy Pomocy (the PWAF) participated in a program of song, dance and music at the Carteret (NJ) High School on Feb. 17th

The Polish Tatra Mountaineer's Alliance is presenting a play (Jak Baba Djabła Wykiwała) and exhibition of mountaineer dances. Mr. Gromada and his Górale are one the most interesting and authentic groups in the country; their dances are really fascinating. Sun. March 3rd at the Polish National Home 1 - 3 Monroe St. Passaic N.J.

Gary Vandershaff is giving up calling for the season at the end of March as the spring ploughing will keep him too busy. His orchestra (The Mountain Ramblers) has a new sax player and the fiddler will do the calling.

Some quite fair square dance material filters in through station WWVA (Wheeling, W. Va.), if you can stand all the junk and commercials they dole out. Their Saturday Night Jamboree (11 PM to 2 AM) is about the easiest to take.

Don Messner has an A-1 square dance band on station CFCY every Monday and Wednesday evening, 6 to 6.15 P.M.

Another nice Canadian program, with square dance and an occasional folk dance, is 'The Prairie Schooner' on CBL (Winnipeg); Mondays, 11 to 11.30 P,M.

Miss Barbara Wood who writes Helen those nice long letters from New Zealand, has sent in some very interesting material on Maori dances and games. She expects to visit the States one of these days; we'll guarantee her a set of square and folk dance calluses on both feet!

Two people we'll miss a lot at the Ranger's and IHC doings are Rena Kamena and Eileen Rourke. Rena is planning an addition to the family and Eileen has signed up with the Radio City Rockettes. Best of luck to both of you!

The annual Cowboy's Christmas Ball (Texas) and the annual Sheepherder's Ball (Idaho) were the most successful in years. We'll have to give you pictures of some of these events when we get our pictorial section organized - subscriptions finance such endeavors:- tell your friends about 'Rosin the Bow'.

You'll find new date for the Museum of Natural History song and dance series in the directory.

I finished up a Friday night calling date in Montclair at 11 P.M. (church party), and stopped in at Schweithguth's Grove on the way home to see Chuck Zintel. He had six sets going and I called 'Outside Track for them. Ben Hyatt, the pianist has given up playing for the squares at Lake Hiawatha on Saturday nights - too far to drive. Johnny Loschiavo, the drummer is calling in Cliffside Park on Saturdays.

The Polish Folk Art and Dance Group held their open house after some confusion and a postponement due to conflicting dates. I'll get the next date for you; you'll enjoy one of their affairs.

Bob De Long paid a visit to Poughkeepsie Grange the other Saturday night. Nice crowd there he says, about 250 people and a 5-piece orchestra. They have their own version of right and left through:- they return backwards to places after passing through instead of turning around. The old fashioned schottische is a popular favorite. Thanks, Bob.

The Western Ranchman Outfitters, 210 W 16th St. Cheyenne, Wyoming have just issued a new mail-order catalogue of cowboy duds. Say Rod sent you.

Ed Durlacher's square dance folio is out. $1.00 at Kamin's or your music shop. Lots of illustrations and foolproof explanations. A swell arrangement on the music - and the violin part is separate. All veegee.

And Ed is tagged in the April issue of the American as an 'interesting person'. Color photo poor.

I hear that the next issue of the 'Folk Dancer' is to contain an article on Ralph Page?

Chuck Zintel's callers night at Hilltop Barn was quite an event. Callers for the evening: Al Brundage, Hal Brundage, George Hill, Hobart Marshall, Ed Durlacher and Chuck Zintel.

Both Brundages and Ed used call with 'balance' (the New England style) which is unknown to most North Jerseyites. It was fun to see them try to learn the maneuver in three uneasy lessons!

Al Brundage brought Trude Tanguay, his pet fiddler down with him; the boy is really good. During intermission he entertained the crowd with a display of trick fiddling: you wouldn't believe me if I described it for you!

Among those present besides the callers' families I spotted the Schwartzes, Joe Jeniec, the Schwabs, Florence Blume, the Knowley girls, the gang from Pearl River, Jack Bailey, Don Conine, Mr. Jatzen,

Mr. Van Voorhis and the Van Blarcoms. George Hill brought two sets with him; he is holding his caller's night at Singer's Grove, Springfield N.J. March 10th.

A letter from Mr. Tiger tells of his preferences in square dance orchestra make-up. Have you any pet ideas? Let's hear about 'em.

The International Center YWCA 341 East 17th St. New York City is conducting a series of classes for folk dance teachers. Mondays 7 to 9 P.M. Here is the schedule:- Feb. 18, 25 - Polish, instructed by Mr. John Galinski; March 4, 11 - South American - Mrs. Ella Sonkin; March 18, 25 - Caucasian - Mr. Yasha Yakovlev; April 1, 8 - Mexican - Señorita Josefina Garcia; April 15, 22 - Philippine - Miss Gloria Ligot. Mrs. Siller at the piano for all classes. $1.50 per session.

Rather flattering to have people coming up to the Saturday night hoedowns at the Grange in Wyckoff from as far away as Long Island, Pennsylvania and Newburgh. Quite a drive for the Middletown boys too Looks like a full house for the square dance contest.

The barn dance at Passaic YMHA went over very well in spite of the crowd being all beginners. I gave simple squares, games and later some Jewish folk dances. The Sagebrush Troubadours did well on the folk music, and in the middle of one of the dances, an elderly gentleman dashed out to embrace me and exclaim over 'the real Jewish spirit' of the dance demonstration and music. A compliment indeed, since none of us are Jewish. The YH signed me up for a series of Thusday night classes.

I called for a capacity crowd at the Passaic YMCA Feb. 22. The Sagebrush Troubadours furnished the music - hot on that Jackson White 'Donkey Dance'.

Just out: National Folk Festival in Cleveland this year, May 21 - 25. Saw Gene Gowing's schedule in 'American Squares'; added it to directory. Sorry I didn't get more exotic material in this issue, but the square dance news kept me hoppin'.